

# **Solano County Child Welfare Services**

## **System Improvement Plan Update**



**Prepared by Solano County Health and  
Social Services Department  
Child Welfare Services Division**

**January 7, 2008**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b><u>BACKGROUND</u></b> .....	1
<b><u>SIP PRIORITY OUTCOMES: NARRATIVE</u></b> .....	1
S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment .....	1
C1.1. Reunification Within 12 Months.....	2
C1.3. Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort).....	2
C1.4. Reentry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort).....	3
2B Timely Response (Immediate Response Compliance) .....	4
2B Timely Response (10-Day Response Compliance) .....	4
2C Timely Social Worker Visits with the Child .....	4
4B Least Restrictive (Entries First Placement: Relative).....	4
<b><u>ADDITIONAL SUPPORTIVE STRATEGIES</u></b> .....	4
Ia. Recruitment, Development Support Workgroup (RDS): .....	5
Ib. Building Community Partnerships (BCP): .....	5
Ic. Self-Evaluation Workgroup .....	5
II. Solano County Heart Gallery.....	5
III. Transitional Housing Program- Plus.....	6
IV. Independent Living Skills Program.....	6
V. Kinship Support Services Program.....	7
<b><u>SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE TEMPLATES</u></b> .....	8
<b><u>GLOSSARY OF TERMS</u></b> .....	34

**Solano County  
System Improvement Plan Update  
January 2007**

**BACKGROUND**

In recent years, a number of laws, regulations, and initiatives on the federal and state levels have increasingly required child welfare agencies to develop a course of action for continuous evaluation of agency performance. In 2001, the Child Welfare System Improvement and Accountability Act (AB 636) provided a detailed, legal framework for measuring and monitoring each county's performance on outcome indicators and systemic factors that directly influence the safety, permanence, and well-being of children and families. The three key components of this integrated process of continual system improvement for county child welfare services include: the Peer Quality Case Review (PQCR), the Self-Assessment (SA), and the System Improvement Plan (SIP).

For the purpose of assessing progress and performance on the priority outcomes documented in the SIP, each county is mandated to provide the state with an annual update. In 2006, based on PQCR and the Self-Assessment, Solano County identified six priority outcomes on which to focus as well as multiple improvement strategies and milestones for each outcome. The following is a summary of the County's current performance by outcome measure based on data provided in the CWS Outcomes System Reports for California and Solano County found on the CWS/CMS Dynamic Report System Website.

**SIP PRIORITY OUTCOMES: NARRATIVE**

**S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment: National Goal 94.6%**

A comparison of two complete years, April 2005 through March 2006 with April 2006 through March 2007, showed a 2.1% decrease (92.5% to 90.4% respectively) in the number of children who were not victims of recurrence in Solano County. Albeit Solano is considered a small to mid-size county and therefore, a slight percentage decrease may actually represent a small number of children, Solano County Child Welfare Services (CWS) considers any negative directional change in this area unacceptable and consistently strives to develop strategies that will positively impact the safety of all children in this county.

One component of the Family to Family initiative, Team Decision Making (TDM), is a strategy that CWS has put into place to reduce recurrence. TDM meetings are designed to help increase parental cooperation with CWS and other supportive services as well as to quickly involve immediate and extended family members along with community partners and neighborhood resources in support of the family. Parental alliance with CWS along with the early involvement of family, community partners and neighborhood resources should serve to help prevent recurrence. Although CWS had held every type of TDM, including imminent risk of placement, emergency placement, placement move, and exit from placement in the target community, Vallejo, six other communities within Solano have not had the benefit of full implementation. The process of rolling-out TDMs in the remaining communities is in progress.

Solano County realizes that to accomplish our mission of safety, permanency, and stability for children and their families, CWS must continue to develop and to sustain supportive strategies to strengthen our Family Resource Centers (FRC), thus enabling them to provide a network of preventative services. At this time, CWS has done, and continues to do so, through:

- Ongoing fiscal support
- Solano County Quarterly meetings with CWS Program Administrator.

- Intake and Emergency Response social worker attendance at FRC monthly conference meeting.
- QA/QI and manager collaboration with FRCs during the development of their Family Matrix Model, an online outcomes model for assessment, case management and evaluation. This model enables Family Service Agencies to track family outcomes over time in a way that allows for an understanding of the complex challenges and needs of each families and thus for provision of resources where they are the most efficient and effective. Working with the FRCs on this project has promoted their awareness of CWS' outcome goals, and enabled a closer alignment with CWS outcomes and FRC goals

Recently, in at least two CWS cases, a presiding Juvenile Court Judge dismissed the Social Worker III's recommendation for jurisdiction, and in these cases, recurrence subsequently occurred. CWS is resolutely committed to continue working with the court as articulated in three SIP milestones, (1) the monthly Brown Bag lunch meeting, the function of which is to improve practice and share information among judges and CWS administrators, managers, supervisors and social workers as well as attorneys and other court personnel, (2) the reestablished Legal Services Unit (LSU), whose objective is to address and resolve court-related issues, including late reports, continuances and contests which are initiated by social workers and by attorneys and other stakeholders within the court system, and (3) ongoing meetings with Court Administrators to streamline legal paperwork and procedures. Important to note is that albeit the these milestones are indicated in the narrative and the template as objectives for CWS' priority outcome, Reunification Within 12 Months, directly addressing court related issues is contributing to CWS' efforts to reduce both recurrence of maltreatment and reentry.

Solano County has implemented and is expanding CWS' Voluntary Family Maintenance (VFM) Unit, which offers short-term, case management services to cooperative families whose cases do not rise to the level of filing a petition or who have been remanded by the court to participate in these services. Systematic, thorough case management facilitates our goal of keeping families intact while ameliorating the problems that brought the case to CWS' attention. The brief time frame allotted for VFM services necessitates close supervision by as Social Work III, and in at least two of these cases, the intensified level of oversight revealed that safety issues requiring the child to be removed from the home.

#### **C1.1. Reunification Within 12 Months (Exit Cohort): National Goal 75.2%**

#### **C1.3. Reunification Within 12 Months (Entry Cohort): National Goal 75.2%**

A comparison of two complete years (exit cohort), April 2005 through March 2006 with April 2006 through March 2007, showed an 11% increase (57.8% to 90.4% respectively) in the number of children who were reunified in less than 12 months. When comparing the entry cohort data for April through September 2005 with October 2005 through March 2006, Solano County showed a 3.5% increase in the number of children whose reunification occurred within 12 months. Progress in these outcomes can be attributed to the hard work of Social Workers who are using the combination of strategies and milestones CWS has instituted to increase the number of children who are reunified with their families within the 12 month timeframe. Family Maintenance/Family Reunification (FM/FR) staff is using the Structured Decision Making (SDM) tool to limit case plans to 2-3 of the most critical objectives, enabling parents to thoroughly address the issues that necessitated removal of their child(ren), which in turn, can provide for a more expeditious reunification.

The use of TDMs provides for the individualization and prioritization of case plan objectives, parental increase in cooperation with their case plans, prompt support from community partners and neighborhood resources for families and children, all of which help to move families toward reunification as quickly as possible. TDMs have occurred throughout the various CWS units. Of 73 total TDMs, 81% of the cases came from the Emergency Response and Intake units, 15% came from Family Maintenance/Family Reunification unit, 3% from Permanency Planning and 1% from Adoptions.

Although much of the timeline to exit foster care to reunification is fixed, due to legally-mandated timing of court hearings, there is opportunity for improvement in reducing the number of continuances and contests which are initiated by social workers as well as those initiated by attorneys and other stakeholders. CWS' newly reestablished Legal Services Unit (LSU) continues to address and resolve court-related issues. The Legal Services Supervisor has developed and implemented strategies for improving the timeliness of court reports, including:

- **Court Report Due Dates:** The LSU now tracks Court Report Due Dates for major review hearings. Each supervisor (except ER) now receives monthly listings all court dates by unit. These listings include the dates that the reports are due to the supervisor, LSU, and Court.
- **Reminder Notices:** LSU has implemented a reminder system to inform social workers, supervisors, and managers when late Court Reports are submitted to the LSU. Notices (on salmon colored paper) are escalated to the Supervisor (1<sup>st</sup> notice), Manager (2<sup>nd</sup> notice), and Deputy Director (3<sup>rd</sup> notice) when reports are late.
- **Psychotropic Medication Request:** LSU met with the prescribing doctors at Solano County Mental Health and further meetings will be scheduled. In an effort to decrease the length of time to obtain court authorization for the medication, LSU now **tracks** Motions for Psychotropic Medications. Reminder notices (on purple paper) are given to the social worker and the supervisor. The notification system is similar to that for late court reports, in that the notices elevate to managers if a timely response is not received.
- **Court Report Timeliness Statistics:** LSU compiles statistics indicating court report status and timeliness. The data is separated by unit and social worker. Although the data reports are not exact, they provide an estimation of the number of reports processed by the LSU and the number of late and timely Court Reports submitted.

All LSU information is posted on CWS' Intranet; therefore, it is available to all staff at all times.

#### **C1.4. Reentry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort): National Goal 9.9%**

A comparison of April 2004 through March 2005 with April 2005 through March 2006, showed that Solano County had a 2.7% increase (7.8% to 10.1%) in the number of children who reentered following reunification. Comparing the last quarter of 2005 with the first quarter of 2006 (11.5% and 10.1% respectively), revealed a 1.4% decrease in the number of children reentering. At 10.1%, Solano County is .2 of a percentage point from the national goal of 9.9%, a goal to which CWS is committed to reaching and exceeding through the efforts describe in strategies and milestones addressing reentry.

Because community based agencies provide both preventive and aftercare services, reducing the need for CWS intervention as well as likelihood of reentry, Solano County has been working with PSSF funded Family Resource Centers (FRCs) to include time-limited family reunification services. Contracts of all PSSF funded FRCs have been modified to include time-limited FR services. Deputy Director, Linda Orrante, has invited State (OCAP) to present at future FRC meetings on this issue. In addition, the Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) Program Specialist and a CWS program manager have attended Strategies Inc. conferences to participate in the redevelopment, including reliability and validity testing, of the Family Development Matrix (FDM), a comprehensive, strengths-based assessment tool used by FRCs that demarcates the specific types of support needed for families and children. When sufficient support is provided, reentry is less likely.

The full utilization of Structured Decision Making (SDM) in FM/FR can provide consistency in assessing risk to children and determining when intervention is no longer needed so as to reduce likelihood of reentry. FM/FR staff is using SDM tools and reflecting their use in documentation. Supervisors are monitoring compliance, and staff has been given two compliance tools to help them know appropriate tool to use and when tool should be use. The current goal of having 100% compliance with the use of SDM in FM/FR by December of 2007 has been accomplished.

## **2B Timely Response (Immediate Response Compliance)**

### **2B Timely Response (10-Day Response Compliance)**

For quarter 4, 2006, Solano County showed 98.9% for immediate response compliance and 98.3% for 10-Day, and for January through March 2007, 99.1% for both immediate and 10-day. Although a national goal is not shown for 2B, Solano County CWS has set an internal goal of  $\geq 90\%$  for both response types. Since the performance measure on these outcomes is contingent on complete implementation of CWS/CMS, key to improvement is timely and accurate data entry into CWS/CMS that includes ongoing oversight from supervisory staff. To ensure that this oversight occurs, supervisors have been provided refresher training on the use of SafeMeasures as a program for monitoring data entry compliance. As new supervisors are hired, they are given individual instruction. All CWS supervisors are now using CWS/CMS and SafeMeasures to monitor compliance reports, and they work closely with staff to ensure that all time sensitive data are entered within mandated timeframes. Supervisors are required to provide their respective managers with an explanation for any failure to enter documentation. Managers report to the Deputy Director. Protocol for entering contact information has been communicated to all staff, and social worker follow through is being evidenced by improved contact compliance reports.

### **2C Timely Social Worker Visits with the Child**

The comparison of Q4 2006 average with that of Q1 2007 showed Solano County as having a one percentage point increase in the number of timely social worker visits. Solano County has placed significant emphasis on ensuring that social workers are routinely visiting the children on their caseload. CWS' Deputy Director has consistently stressed the importance of timely visits and to this end, has mandated that each social worker provides a monthly contact compliance report to supervisors, supervisors to managers, and by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month, section managers prepare a final report for CWS Deputy Director. When completing their monthly reports, social workers are required to provide explanations for any contacts they did not make. Identified patterns of noncompliance are initially addressed during supervision; however, if the problem persists, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is developed. In addition, The QA/QI Program Specialist uses SafeMeasures and CWS/CMS to monitor Timely Social Worker Visits. Monthly reports are submitted to CWS' Deputy Director and to Program Administrator.

In addition, CWS has found examples in which some contacts have been entered into CWS/CMS but the report indicated that no contact had been entered. In these cases, there have been one (or more) of the same client recorded in the system and that merging the duplicates allows the contact to show up on the report. Managers and supervisors are aware of, and correct, this problem as it is brought to their attention.

### **4B Least Restrictive (Entries First Placement: Relative)**

From Q4 2006 to Q1 2007, Solano County experienced a one percentage point decrease in the number of first entry children who are being placed with relatives. During a period of time in 2006, CWS encountered difficulty in the process of securing sufficient monetary support for relatives who were considering caring for children who were entering the system. In that placement with relatives has been a priority for Solano County, CWS developed and put into place several strategies to address this issue. Please see Strategies and attendant Milestones 4.2 through 4.3.

## **ADDITIONAL SUPPORTIVE STRATEGIES**

Subsequent to the completion of the SIP in August of 2006, Solano County CWS developed or reorganized and implemented several organizational strategies/goals that are strengthening CWS' commitment to the safety, permanency and well being of children and families.

Each of the following workgroups are comprised of CWS staff, including any combination of managers, supervisors, social workers and other agency staff, as well as of community partners, foster parents and other interested individuals. Not every goal or objective has been listed for

each workgroup; however, those cited have shown to support CWS' SIP goals as well as the Outcome Measures, in general.

#### **Ia. Recruitment, Development Support Workgroup (RDS)**

*Goal:* To assure that children who cannot be protected in their own home will be placed with a safe and stable family from their own neighborhood.

- *Objective:* (1) increase the number of specialized resource homes that will take sibling groups and medically fragile children, (2) identify temporary emergency homes that will hold beds and accept children, while CWS looks for an appropriate match, (3) recruit emergency foster homes in all communities to include providing care for sibling groups and Spanish speaking children, (4) increase the number of foster care beds for children with behavioral problems, (5) develop a clear strategy and plan to increase the number of foster homes that will take teenagers and (7) develop specialized county homes that would take minor parents and their child/children for the purpose of helping them to understand how to properly care for their child/children.
- *Objective:* Support foster parents, by leading an effort to get all of the foster parent associations together to figure out a way in which they can work together to support foster parents through a peer mentoring program.
- *Objective:* Support adoptive parents by leading an effort to provide peer mentoring and post-adoption support groups.
- *Objective:* Work with Solano Community college to improve curriculum/training for Relative/Non-Relative Extended Family Members and to develop an improved support group for relatives and non-related extended family members.

#### **Ib. Building Community Partnerships (BCP)**

*Goals:* (1) Establish a strong network of neighborhood based resource families, (2) ensure that community representatives are present at every Team Decision Making meeting, (3) Identify and enhance services and supports that are accessible financially, culturally, and geographically for all families who live there, (4) reduce the overrepresentation of African American children, children of color and poor children in the child welfare system.

- *Objective:* Identify natural supports in the community for FM/FR families, e.g., strong and healthy families in the community to become family mentors
- *Objective:* Identify community partners/Community Based Organizations/Faith Based Organizations who will provide services and incentives, specifically for foster parents
- *Objective:* To help in developing a protocol for Differential Response in 08-09 focusing on documenting and formalizing our current practice in Path I (0-5) and informal Path II responses. Role of BCP is to give feedback and input to draft plan.

#### **Ic. Self-Evaluation Workgroup**

*Goals:* (1) To provide a comprehensive baseline perspective on agency performance and (2) create a capability for determining how changes in agency policies and practices are affective outcomes, particularly those related to key Family to Family strategies/outcomes. Family to Family strategies/outcomes closely align with several CWS outcome measures.

- *Objective:* To review and analyze first entry data and give to RDS help with specialized recruitment of emergency foster care homes.
- *Objective:* Review re-entry rates from FM/FR and identify strategies for reducing re-entry.
- *Objective:* Identify what statistics should be captured within each unit and distributed to the other units for the purpose of enhancing the Team Decision Meeting planning and for evaluating placement and licensing needs.

#### **II. Solano County Heart Gallery ( [www.solanoheartgallery.com](http://www.solanoheartgallery.com) )**

In January of 2007, a group of Solano County CWS staff members began working on the Heart Gallery, a national strategy for helping more of our children find permanent homes and for inspiring our community members to become adoptive or foster parents, or Court Appointed Special Advocates. The Solano Heart Gallery is an extraordinary photographic art exhibit that features children in foster care who are waiting for an adoptive family and for whom we have had

difficulty finding a loving and stable home. Among the featured children are older children, sibling groups, children of color, and children with special needs. They all dream of having a forever family - many, for most of their lives.

By enlisting the skills of volunteer professional photographers and writers, the unique spirit of each child shines through to capture the hearts of those who view their portraits. Heart Galleries have been used very successfully throughout California and the Nation to recruit adoptive and foster homes for children who wait. Solano Heart Gallery strives to achieve the following goals:

- To find adoptive homes for children who wait for a forever families
- To encourage individuals to become foster parents
- To encourage individuals to become Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

Since it's unveiling on November 15, 2007,

### **III. Transitional Housing Program- Plus (THP-Plus)**

In June of this year, Solano County Health & Social Services selected First Place For Youth, a nonprofit organization founded in 1998 to end homelessness and poverty among former foster youth, to provide supportive services through their Transitional Housing Program-Plus (THP-PLUS) to emancipated dependent and probation youth as well as to youth who are preparing for emancipation. In addition to helping youth, aged 18 to their 25 birthday, find affordable, safe, stable housing, the THP-Plus mentoring staff facilitate a variety of other supportive services, such as educational advocacy, job readiness training and linkages to resources, assistance in pursuing college or post high school training, assistance with building support-family and community relationships, 24 hour crisis intervention and support, individual and group therapy, aftercare support groups, and referrals to community resources. THP- Plus also provides participants with an emancipation fund of \$50 per month, allowances to purchase food and necessities, and apartment furnishings, either directly or through a stipend. To date, the THP-Plus program has successfully placed 12 adolescents, two of who are probation youth, in affordable, safe, stable housing. Twelve more youth have begun participating in the initial phase of the program, and 50 more eligible adolescents have receive referrals.

#### **THP-Plus PROGRAM OUTCOME MEASURES**

- Employment
- Financial Planning
- Educational Success
- Health
- Mental Health
- Quality relationships within the community

### **IV. Independent Living Skills Program (ILP)**

In June of this year, Solano County Health & Social Services enhanced the existing Independent Living Skills Program (ILSP) by entering into a contract with Alternative Family Services (AFS) to work in conjunction with THP-Plus to provide ILSP services to Solano County foster and probation youth, aged 15 ½ to 21. The ASF program emphasizes individual work with the youth it serves. Mentoring staff use the goals expressed by participants to craft a comprehensive ILSP plan that is tailored to the specific needs of the individual. Through this personalized, youth-centered approach, participants can receive assistance with obtaining a high school diploma, employment, vocational training, college enrollment and financial aid, daily living skills as well as locating transitional housing. AFS also operates a resource center, a place where youth are encouraged to connect with other adolescents, do homework and/or meet with their ILSP worker. To date, Solano County has referred 129 adolescents to AFS. AFS has attempted to contact all 129 participants to begin the assessment process. Sixty one of these adolescents have had an initial meeting with a case manager and 46 of the 61 have had an assessment and begun receiving supportive services.



**V. Kinship Support Services Program (KSSP)**

The KSSP program, which CWS is anticipating to implement in the second half of 2008, will provide community-based family support services to grandparents and other relatives who care for children outside their parents' homes. Relatives will be eligible for these services whether or not the children have come to the attention of the Juvenile Court.

**SIP OUTCOMES**

Incorporating data from the new analyses of the seventeen federal outcome measures for the second round of the Children and Family Services Review, the attached SIP Update template details Solano County's performance on CWS' priority outcome measures,

**Solano County  
System Improvement Plan Update Templates  
January 2008**

<b>1.0: S1.1 No Recurrence of Maltreatment:</b> This measure reflects the number and percentage of children who do not experience recurrence of maltreatment. <b>National Goal: 94.6%</b>							
<b>Improvement Goal 1.0</b> Increase the number of all children in a first foster care episode who exit to reunification within 12 months.							
<b>Time Period</b> 04/01/05 – 03/31/06 04/01/06 – 03/31/07		<b>Solano County Performance</b> 92.5% 90.4%		<b>State Performance</b> 92.0% 92.5%			
<b>Strategy 1. 1</b> Fully utilize Structured Decision Making (SDM).			<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Use of SDM will provide Intake and Emergency Response (ER) with a more efficient, consistent system for determining response to referrals, as well as an evidence-based method for assessing the need for, and level of, intervention for families.				
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>1.1.1</b> Intake screeners to consistently use the SDM decision tree to determine response. <b>Update:</b> Intake screeners have consistently completed 3,439 SDM Hotline Tools since September 2006, with a 99.9% completion rate.		<b>Timeframe</b>	Beginning April 2006 Ongoing		<b>Assigned to</b>	Intake Screeners, Intake Supervisor, and Manager
	<b>1.1.2</b> ER social workers to consistently use SDM tools to guide decisions regarding safety and risk to children. <b>Update:</b> ER social workers have consistently used SDM (1) Safety Tools totaling 2,042 since September of 2006, with a 94.5% completion rate and (2) 1,908 Risk Tools with a 90.42% completion rate			Beginning April 2006 Ongoing			ER Social Workers, ER Supervisors, and Manager
	<b>1.1.3</b> Family Maintenance/Family Reunification (FM/FR) social workers to consistently utilize SDM tools regarding any new referrals on open cases. <b>Update:</b> Staff is using SDM tools, and FM/FR social workers have met section manager's projection of 100% compliance by December 2007.			Beginning April 2006 Ongoing			FM/FR Social Workers, FM/FR Supervisors, and Manager

	<p><b>1.1.4</b> Monitor use of SDM to ensure full utilization. <b>Update:</b> Intake screeners consistently and accurately use the SDM Hotline Tools to determine the appropriate response, with a 99.7% most recent completion rate. Albeit ER social workers have shown a pattern of consistent use of SDM's Safety and Risk assessments, the most recent report shows a slight increase in missing assessment for both Safety and Risk assessments. Although FM/FR has met the goal of 100% use by December 2007, consistent timeliness of use will require additional supervision. QA/QI reports to section managers data that support concerns and recommendations when expectations for use are not being met. In April and May of this 2007, QA/AI Program Specialist was trained by Rod Caskey from the Children's Research Center to monitor the consistency and accuracy of the SDM tool currently being used in the Intake, ER, and FM/FR Units.</p>		Ongoing		QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors
<p><b>Strategy 1. 2</b> Fully implement Family to Family/TDM.</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale</b> Use of Team Decision Making (TDM) will help to involve community partners and neighborhood resources more quickly in support of the family, to increase buy-in of the parents in cooperating with services, and to prevent removal of children as much as possible, consistent with children's safety. The early involvement of community partners and neighborhood resources should serve to prevent recurrence.</p>			
Milestone	<p><b>1.2.1.</b> Implement TDMs in our targeted community (Vallejo) for new children entering the system. <b>Update:</b> Solano County has implemented TDMs in Vallejo for new children entering the system.  Albeit this milestone has been completed, TDMs are ongoing as well as the improvement of the TDM process.</p>	Timeframe	Completed	Assigned to	Family to Family Coordinator, TDM Facilitator, and Social Workers
	<p><b>1.2.2</b> Strengthen the Family Resource Center (FRC) network to provide a network of preventative services to families who have come to our attention. <b>Update:</b> To ensure a robust network of preventative services for children and families, Solano County, CWS has provided fiscal support, quarterly collaborative meetings with CWS Program Administrator and administrative involvement with the development of an online outcomes evaluation tool for assessing the needs of families.</p>		Completed and Ongoing		CWS Deputy Director, Administrator, and Managers

	<p><b>1.2.3</b> Develop neighborhood resources to which clients can be referred for support and assistance as referrals are being closed. <b>Update:</b> CWS has developed, and continues to pursue, strong partnerships with Family Resource Centers (FRSs) in each community. FRCs are consistently invited TDMs so that support services are made available immediately to families.</p> <p>CWS' Building Community Partnership workgroup, consisting of CWS staff and community representatives, has been reorganized and charged with continuing to develop, identify and enhance neighborhood resources and supports that are accessible financially, culturally and geographically for all families who live in any area.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Beginning August 2007and Ongoing</p>		<p>Family to Family Coordinator, Supervisors, and Managers</p>
<p><b>Strategy 1. 3</b> Provide short-term Voluntary Family Maintenance services for one to three months.</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale</b> Provision of short-term services can often resolve crisis situations and/or connect clients to services that can continue beyond the voluntary period.</p>			
<p><b>Milestone</b></p>	<p><b>1.3.1</b> Work with the ER staff to continue reframing response to referrals from investigation to provision of services. <b>Update:</b> Emergency Response (ER) Social Workers have developed the practice of providing 30 day of services to stabilize families and address child safety.</p> <p>Expand the Voluntary Family Maintenance (VFM) services to maintain children in the home once ER Social Workers identify who will benefit from VFM.</p>	<p><b>Timeframe</b></p>	<p>September 2006 and Ongoing</p> <p>January 2007 and Ongoing</p>	<p><b>Assigned to</b></p>	<p>ER Social Workers, ER Supervisors, and Manager</p>
	<p><b>1.3.2</b> Utilizing ER social workers to continue to provide short-term interventions, rather than brief investigations. <b>Update:</b> ER Social Workers are now geographically assigned; thereby, enabling them to work closely with each communities Family Resource Centers to provide short term interventions by engaging families in needed services</p>		<p>January 2007 and Ongoing</p>		<p>ER Social Workers, ER Supervisors, and Manager</p>
	<p><b>1.3.3</b> Develop Policies and Procedures to support the value of providing short-term interventions. <b>Update:</b> CWS has developed a draft of the Voluntary Family Maintenance policy and procedures to guide practice that will help identify families and provide needed services.</p>		<p>March 2007 In Progress</p>		<p>ER Social Workers, ER Supervisors, and Manager, with the support of the Policies and Procedures Program Specialist</p>

<b>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full implementation of Family to Family and SDM</li><li>• Continue to develop the staff's ownership and identity as a Family to Family agency</li><li>• Promote staff's appreciation of the benefits of the use of SDM to increase consistency and fairness</li><li>• Develop Policies and Procedures regarding the SDM and TDM</li></ul>
<b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop and implement training regarding the TDM process</li><li>• Enhance staff's knowledge and skills with the SDM process</li><li>• Provide training on the Policies and Procedures</li></ul>
<b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue the TDM and Building Community Partnership workgroups with our community partners and identified neighborhood resources</li></ul>
<b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b> N/A

**2.0: C1.1 Reunification Within 12 Months:** This outcome measure reflects the percent of children reunified within 12 months of removal of a child from the home.  
**National Goal: 75.2% (Exit Cohort): 48.4% (Entry Cohort)**

**Improvement Goal 2.0**

Increase the number of all children in a first foster care episode who exit to reunification within 12 months.

	Time Period	Solano County Performance	State Performance
Exit Cohort	04/01/05 – 03/31/06	57.8%	62.0%
	04/01/06 – 03/31/07	68.8%	64.0%
Entry Cohort	04/01/05 – 09/30/05	42.0%	38.8%
	10/01/05 – 03/31/06	45.5%	39.8%
<b>Strategy 2.1</b> Fully utilize SDM.		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Use of SDM will help to prioritize case plan objectives, to assess the appropriateness of unsupervised visitation, and to move families toward reunification as quickly as possible, consistent with children's safety.	

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>2.1.1</b> FM/FR staff will utilize the SDM tools to prioritize case plan objectives and to assist at all decision-making points. <b>Update:</b> FM/FR staff is using the SDM tool to limit case plans to 2-3 of the most critical objectives, enabling parents to thoroughly and successfully address as quickly as feasibly possible the issues that necessitated removal of their children.	<b>Timeframe</b>	October 2006 Ongoing	<b>Assigned to</b>	Social Workers
	<b>2.1.2</b> FM/FR staff will expand use of the SDM tools to all children currently in the system. <b>Update:</b> SDM tools have been expanded to all children currently in the system, and are now routinely being used prior to case plan development and during six month reviews.		December 2006 Ongoing		Social Workers
	<b>2.1.3</b> Monitor use of SDM to ensure full utilization. <b>Update:</b> Although FM/FR's overall use of the SDM tools is increasing, full utilization with consistency and accuracy requires ongoing supervision. QA/QI reports to section managers data that support concerns and recommendations when expectations for use are not being met.		Ongoing		QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors

<b>Strategy 2. 2</b> Fully utilize TDM		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Use of TDMs will help to individualize and prioritize case plan objectives, to involve community partners and neighborhood resources more quickly in support of the family, to increase buy-in of the parents in cooperating with their case plan, and to move families toward reunification as quickly as possible, consistent with children’s safety.			
Milestone	<b>2.2.1</b> Implement TDMs in our targeted community (Vallejo) for new children entering the system. <b>Update:</b> Solano county has implemented TDMs in Vallejo.	Timeframe	October 2006 Completed	Assigned to	Family to Family Coordinator, TDM Facilitator, and Social Workers
	<b>2.2.2</b> Children who had a TDM entering the system will continue to have TDMs at each decision point, including reunification. <b>Update:</b> Within one year of implementation, Solano County held every type of TDM, including imminent risk of placement, emergency placement, placement move, and exit from placement.		October 2006 Completed		Family to Family Coordinator, TDM Facilitator, and Social Workers
	<b>2.2.3</b> Once the process for TDMs is in place and working well, the system will expand to include TDMs prior to reunification for any child.		July 2008		Family to Family Coordinator, TDM Facilitator, and Social Workers
<b>Strategy 2. 3</b> Address procedural issues within the Court system.		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Although much of the timeline to exit foster care to reunification is fixed, due to legally-mandated timing of court hearings, there is opportunity for improvement in reducing the number of continuances and contests which are initiated by social workers as well as those initiated by attorneys and other stakeholders.			
Milestone	<b>2.3.1</b> The newly recreated Legal Services Unit will continue to address and expeditiously resolve court-related issues. <b>Update:</b> This process continues to operate as defined. A Court Workgroup has been charted to specifically work on improving court deliverables. This workgroup has been given additional authority by the Deputy Director to facilitate the implementation of projects that it completes	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Legal Services Supervisor and CWS Managers



	<b>2.3.2</b> Hold monthly “Brown Bag” lunch meetings with the judges and quarterly Judges’ Forums to improve communication between staff and judicial officers. <b>Update:</b> The monthly Brown Bag meetings continue to be held, and are used as a forum to improve practices and share information. The Judges’ Forums have not occurred quarterly; however, judges are currently considering becoming more closely involved with CWS by participating in other CWS forums		Ongoing		Legal Services Supervisor and CWS Managers
	<b>2.3.3</b> Hold ongoing meetings with Court Administrators to streamline legal paperwork and procedures. <b>Update:</b> These meetings have been held on an ad hoc basis to deal with legal paperwork issues that arise;		Ongoing		Legal Services Supervisor and CWS Managers
<b>Strategy 2.4</b> Increase reasonable services available to families.		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Increasing the level of reasonable services available to families will increase likelihood of reunification, as well as the probability of reunification within twelve months.			
Milestone	<b>2.4.1</b> Development of an onsite Visitation Center, which will make parent visitation easier and more frequent. <b>Update:</b> Circumstances beyond the control of CWS administration necessitated a delay in the development of the Visitation Center.  Identify a supervisor whose responsibility is to work with administrators to develop the visitation center as well as to work with the Program Specialist to revise policy and procedure for a visitation program that will include best practice strategies. The facility request has been submitted and approved.	Timeframe	January 2007 Not Completed  Beginning November 2007 and Continuing	Assigned to	CWS Deputy Director and Administrator
	<b>2.4.2</b> Revisit and revise agency policy on visitation to include best practice strategies. <b>Update:</b> Policy and procedures will be revised as the development of the visitation center proceeds.		Ongoing		Policies & Procedures Program Specialist

Milestone	<p><b>2.4.3</b> Continue to locate and/or develop services for non-English speaking clients. <b>Update:</b> Solano County CWS hired a bilingual screener to take referral calls, co-located a bilingual therapist/supervisor, and because CWS currently is unable to provide Parent Resources for Information, Development and Education (PRIDE) training in Spanish, CWS trainers located PRIDE training in a neighboring county for our Spanish speaking, potential foster parents.</p>	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	CWS Deputy Director, Administrator, and Managers
	<p><b>2.4.4</b> Maintain or improve current level of bilingual staff. <b>Update:</b> CWS is in compliance with Division 21 Regulations for level of bilingual staff, and works closely with HR to assure ongoing compliance and improvement.</p>		Ongoing		CWS Deputy Director, Administrator, and Managers
	<p><b>2.4.5</b> Develop contracts for provision of frequently used services (parenting classes, therapy, psychological evaluations, etc.) for availability, ease of access and consistency for clients. <b>Update:</b> The development of contracts for the provision of frequently used services is in progress at this time.</p>		<p>June 2007 Not completed per projected timeframe In Progress</p>		CWS Deputy Director and Administrator
	<p><b>2.4.6</b> Continue activities funded by OIP funds for system improvement (for which the county has applied again). These involve funding for additional staff in various areas. <b>Update:</b> OIP funding is no longer available for the purpose of 2.4.6</p>		Ongoing Funding Unavailable		Deputy Director , Administrator and Managers
	<p><b>2.4.7</b> Implement Parent Information Exchange (PIE) program, throughout the division, allowing parents to meet and exchange information with foster parents, with the expectation a better relationship between the two will increase the likelihood of reunification. <b>Update:</b> Budgetary constraints precluded the expansion of PIE.</p>		October 2006		Social Service Supervisors and Social Workers

<b>Strategy 2.5</b> Newly established contracts will contain targets for assisting with improvement of AB 636 outcomes.		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Embedding the AB 636 outcomes into CWS contracts will assist us in meeting our goals.			
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>2.5.1</b> As new contracts are developed, the outcome measures will be included. <b>Update:</b> As of July 2007, applicable AB636 outcome measures were included in all CWS contracts.	<b>Timeframe</b>	July 2007 Completed and will continue as new contracts are awarded.	<b>Assigned to</b>	Social Services Administrator
	<b>2.5.2</b> As existing contracts expire, the outcome measures will be included as they are renewed. <b>Update:</b> Existing contracts are renewed each year, and applicable AB636 measures were included in all renewed contracts.		Ongoing Completed and will continue as contracts are renewed.		Social Services Administrator
<b>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Full implementation of Family to Family and SDM</li><li>• Continue to develop the staff's ownership and identity as a Family to Family agency</li><li>• Promote staff's appreciation of the benefits of the use of SDM to increase consistency and fairness</li><li>• Develop Policies and Procedures regarding the SDM, TDM and Court processes</li></ul>					
<b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop and implement training regarding the TDM process</li><li>• Enhance staff's knowledge and skills with the SDM process</li><li>• Increase staff's knowledge and compliance with legal requirements which can delay the process</li><li>• Provide training on the Policies and Procedures</li></ul>					
<b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue the TDM and Building Community Partnership workgroups with our community partners and identified neighborhood resources</li><li>• Continue the work begun by the Legal Services Unit to identify, prioritize and address legal issues impacting service delivery</li></ul>					
<b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b> N/A					

<b>3.0: C1.4 Re-Entry Following Reunification (Exit Cohort):</b> This measure reflects the number of children who re-enter foster care subsequent to reunification. <b>National Goal: 9.9%</b>						
<b>Improvement Goal 3.0</b> Decrease the number of all children who re-enter foster care following reunification (Exit Cohort).						
<b>Time Period</b>		<b>Solano County Performance</b>		<b>State Performance</b>		
04/01/04 – 03/31/05		7.8%		11.5%		
04/01/05 – 03/31/06		10.1%		11.9%		
<b>Strategy 3. 1</b> Family to Family/TDM		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> TDM at the point of return establishes a safety plan and a case plan for the family utilizing available community supports, which would reduce the likelihood of reentry.				
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>3.1.1</b> Implement TDMs in our targeted community (Vallejo) for new children entering the system. <b>Update.</b> Solano county has implemented TDMs in Vallejo.  Once a child is eligible and has a TDM, provide placement move TDMs to any siblings who are also in foster.  Albeit these milestone have been completed, TDMs are ongoing as well as the improvement of the TDM process.		<b>Timeframe</b>	October 2006 Completed	<b>Assigned to</b>	Family to Family Coordinator, TDM Facilitator, and Social Workers
				August 2007 Completed		
				Ongoing		
	<b>3.1.2</b> Children who had a TDM entering the system will continue to have TDMs at each decision point, including reunification. <b>Update:</b> Solano County has held every type of TDM, including imminent risk of placement, emergency placement, placement move, and exit from placement in our target community, Vallejo.			October 2006 Completed		Family to Family Coordinator, TDM Facilitator, and Social Workers
	<b>3.1.3</b> Once the process for TDMs is in place and working well, the system would expand to include TDMs prior to reunification for any child.			<b>July 2008</b>		Family to Family Coordinator, TDM Facilitator, and Social Workers

	<p><b>3.1.4</b> Monitor to ensure the TDM process is used appropriately prior to reunification of child. <b>Update:</b> When the TDM process is expanded to include TDMs prior to reunification, QA/QI will address strategies for monitoring and ensuring that the process is used appropriately.</p>		<p><b>Ongoing</b> <b>After July 2008</b></p>		<p>QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors</p>
<p><b>Strategy 3.2</b> Fully utilize SDM.</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale</b> Use of SDM will provide consistency in assessing risk to children and determining when intervention is no longer needed so as to reduce likelihood of reentry.</p>			
<p><b>Milestone</b></p>	<p><b>3.2.1</b> FM/FR staff will consistently use the SDM tools to guide decisions about reunification of children and termination of jurisdiction. <b>Update:</b> FM/FR staff is using SDM tools and reflecting their use in documentation. Supervisors are monitoring compliance, and staff has been given two compliance tools to help them know appropriate tool to use and when tool should be use. FM/FR has reached the section manager's goal of 100% compliance by December of 2007.</p>	<p><b>Timeframe</b></p>	<p>September 2006 Ongoing</p>	<p><b>Assigned to</b></p>	<p>Social Workers</p>
	<p><b>3.2.2</b> Monitor use of SDM to ensure full utilization. <b>Update:</b> Although FM/FR FR has reached the section manager's goal of 100% compliance by December of 2007, timely use of the SDM tools remains a problem and will require ongoing supervision and QA/QI monitoring. QA/QI reports to section managers data that support concerns and recommendations when expectations for use are not being met.</p>		<p>Ongoing</p>		<p>QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors</p>

Strategy 3. 3 Strengthen the FRC network of services for families.		Strategy Rationale Community-based agencies provide both preventative and aftercare services, reducing the need for CWS intervention as well as the likelihood of reentry.			
Milestone	<b>3.3.1</b> Work with PSSF funded FRCs to increase the number of time-limited FR services. <b>Update:</b> Contracts of all PSSF funded FRCs have been modified to include time-limited FR services. All future contracts will include time limited FR services. Deputy Director, Linda Orrante, has invited State (OCAP) to present at future FRC meetings on this issue.	Timeframe	Completed	Assigned to	CWS Deputy Director and Administrator
	<b>3.3.2</b> Develop best practice of establishing an aftercare plan prior to closing a case. <b>Update:</b> At this time, 3.3.2 has not been met. Provisionally, all FR social workers have been advised to ensure that every family knows where needed services, including Family Resource Centers, are located in their respective communities..		October 2006 Not Completed per projected timeframe. In progress.		Social Workers, Supervisors, and Managers
	<b>3.3.3</b> Develop the Policies and Procedures to support the provision of aftercare plans. <b>Update:</b> CWS has been working to develop and implement new policies and procedures, revise all existing policies and procedures and convert from manual to electronic availability. Staff is working on one chapter at a time, and has not reached this area.		December 2006 Not Completed per projected timeframe. In progress		Policies and Procedures Program Specialist
	<b>3.3.4</b> Monitor to ensure that aftercare plans are put in place whenever jurisdiction is terminated on an FM case. <b>Update:</b> Once 3.3.2 has been implemented, QA/QI will address strategies for monitoring and ensuring that aftercare plans are put into place whenever jurisdiction is terminated on an FM cases		Ongoing Not Completed per projected timeframe. In progress		QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors
	<b>3.3.5</b> Remain involved with OCAP and Strategies Inc. as they develop tools for the FRCs to identify and measure performance outcomes common to CWS. <b>Update:</b> A program manager has been identified as CWS' liaison to OCAP. CWS administrative staff participated in Strategies Inc's retooling of their online, strengths-based assessment tool that enables optimal support resources for families and children.		Ongoing		CWS Deputy Director and Managers

<b>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop Policies and Procedures regarding the TDM process</li><li>• Continue to develop the staff's ownership and identity as a Family to Family agency</li><li>• Continue to develop the staff's recognition of the importance of an aftercare plan for a family as a tool to prevent reentry</li></ul>
<b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop and implement training regarding the TDM process</li></ul>
<b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue the TDM and Building Community Partnership workgroups with our community partners and identified neighborhood resources</li></ul>
<b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. N/A</b>

**4.0: 4B Least Restrictive Setting (Entries First Place: Relative).** This measure reflects the percent of children placed in each type of foster care setting.

**Improvement Goal 4.0:** Increase the number of all children first entering foster care who are placed with kin.

Time Period	Solano County Performance	State Performance
04/01/05 – 03/31/06	24.3%	21.5%
04/01/06 – 03/31/07	19.4%	22.2%

<b>Strategy 4. 1</b> Fully utilize TDM	<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Use of TDMs will help to involve parents and therefore relatives more quickly in placement decisions thus increasing the likelihood that children may be able to go to a relative's home as the initial placement. Further, early involvement of community partners and neighborhood resources would offer additional support to relatives in assuming care of children.
---	---

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>4.1.1</b> Implementing TDM in our targeted community (Vallejo) for new children entering the system. <b>Update:</b> Solano county has implemented TDMs in Vallejo.  Albeit this milestone has been completed, TDMs are ongoing as well as the improvement of the TDM process	<b>Timeframe</b>	October 2006 Completed	<b>Assigned to</b>	Family to Family Coordinator, TDM Facilitator, and Social Workers
	<b>4.1.2</b> Expand use of TDMs for children entering the system, community by community, until no child enters placement in Solano County without a TDM. <b>Update:</b> TDM is planned to roll-out in Fairfield for children who will be changing placements only. The next area in the roll out plan will be Vacaville for children who are first entering into care. Protocol for Fairfield and Vacaville TDM roll-out was based on need identified through outcome data.		<b>October 2008</b>		Family to Family Coordinator, TDM Facilitator, and Social Workers
	<b>4.1.3</b> Monitor to ensure TDM process is used appropriately prior to any child's entry into the system. <b>Update:</b> As roll-out is implemented in Fairfield and Vacaville, QA/QI will develop strategies for monitoring and ensuring the appropriate use of these TDM processes.		<b>Ongoing After October 2008</b>		QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors



	<b>4.1.4</b> Fill newly authorized positions for TDM facilitator and scheduler who are essential to fully implementing TDM. <b>Update:</b> One full-time TDM scheduler and one full-time TDM facilitator have been hired. The positions requested to implement the initial TDM roll-out plan have been filled. Need for additional positions to accommodate any further expansion of the TDM process is contingent upon future budgetary considerations.		October 2006 Completed		Hiring Manager
<b>Strategy 4. 2</b> Improve internal county processes for relative approval		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Improvement of internal processes should allow for relative placements to occur more quickly.			
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>4.2.1.</b> Finalize county policy and procedure regarding relative approval process. <b>Update:</b> On May 11, 2007, Solano County CWS' Relative Approval Policy and Procedure, a 50 page document, was finalized and posted to CWS' intranet website, thus available to all staff at all times. As attendant documents are revised, they are also immediately posted to the intranet	<b>Timeframe</b>	September 2006 Completed	<b>Assigned to</b>	CWS Deputy Director, Administrator, Managers and Policies and Procedures Program Specialist
	<b>4.2.2</b> Provide staff with training on policy and procedure. <b>Update:</b> As of June 6, 2007, 83 Solano County Child Welfare employees, including supervisors, social workers and clerical staff were trained on CWS' updated Relative Approval policy and procedures. The entire training is available on CWS' intranet to serve as a refresher course for staff who received the training and as an initial training for new hires.  On November 4, 2007, an additional intensive Relative Approval Process Training was given to managers, supervisors, and one social worker from each unit, providing all staff with a contact person for any questions about our Relative Approval policy and procedures,		November 2006 Completed and Ongoing		Staff Development
			Completed		

	<b>4.2.3</b> Fill newly authorized position for SW who will conduct relative approval process so that it can be done simultaneous with ER investigation. <b>Update:</b> The Relative Approval Social Worker position was filled on November 11, 2007. The Social Worker II in this position currently completes all initial relative approvals and annual home assessments within the county of Solano. The addition of a Relative Approval position is providing Solano County children in need of out-of-home placements with the opportunity to remain in the care of their kin, an alternative to foster care that benefits the child and the family and reduces the growing need for foster care and adoptive homes		October 2006 Completed		Hiring Manager
	<b>4.2.4</b> Monitor to ensure that Relative Approval Process is completed appropriately both initially and at time of renewal. <b>Update:</b> In collaboration with her manager and supervisor, the Social Worker II in this position is addressing any problems with the process as they emerge. Of the 93 relative referrals made for emergency and non-emergency placements, 81 have been processed, and 12 families were no longer interested in becoming a placement home.		Ongoing		QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors
<b>Strategy 4. 3</b> Improve strategies for relative search		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Improvement in our search process will allow the county to locate relatives who can potentially provide placement more quickly.			
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>4.3.1</b> Utilize Internet search sites to look for relatives. <b>Update:</b> Solano County CWS has purchased USA Search, an internet site to be used for finding the relatives of children who are in need of out of home care. In addition, a CWS Manager has been successful in making the Federal Parent Locator Services (FPLS) available to Solano County CWS staff. The FPLS, an automated information system maintained by the Office of Child Support Enforcement, is an additional tool for helping social workers to find absent parents	<b>Timeframe</b>	October 2006 Completed	<b>Assigned to</b>	Social Workers and Parent Search Specialist

<p><b>4.3.2</b> Thoroughly review old referrals/records regarding family to find any relative contact information. <b>Update:</b> Early in 2007, CWS implemented a new relative home approval procedure, and has hired a full time Relative Approval Social Worker whose responsibility is to expeditiously assess relatives and non-related extended family members (NREFMs), as potential placements for children. At the time of removal, social workers in the Emergency Response Units are expected to explore thoroughly relatives/NREFMs, as potential placements for children.</p>		Ongoing		Social Workers and Parent Search Specialist
<p><b>4.3.3</b> Involve partners in seeking information about relatives, i.e., the court asking parents to provide information and the department asking schools, law enforcement, public health, etc. for information their records may contain regarding relatives. <b>Update:</b> Solano County CWS has remained vigilant in scheduling Team Decision Making (TDMs) meetings in partnership with families, the community, service providers, teachers, and other family and friends who collaborate to identify potential relative placements for the child(ren).</p>		Ongoing		Social Workers and Parent Search Specialist
<p><b>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full implementation of Family to Family</li> <li>• Continue to develop the staff's ownership and identity as a Family to Family agency</li> <li>• Develop Policies and Procedures regarding TDM</li> <li>• Hire to fill the new positions created for a TDM facilitator, a scheduler, and a SW to focus on the relative approval process</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement training regarding the TDM process</li> <li>• Increase staff's knowledge and compliance with legal requirements which can delay the process</li> <li>• Continue to develop staff's recognition of the importance of early placement with kin</li> <li>• Provide training on the Policies and Procedures</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue the TDM and Building Community Partnership workgroups with our community partners and identified neighborhood resources</li> <li>• Work with Community Partners and neighborhood resources to assist us in identifying and contacting relatives</li> </ul>				
<p><b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b> N/A</p>				

**5.0: 2B Timely Response (10-Day Response Compliance)** This measure is designed to determine the number and percent of cases in which face-to-face contact occurs within regulatory time frames when abuse of neglect allegations indicate significant danger to the child.

**Improvement Goal 5:** Increase the number of cases in which face-to-face contact with a child occurs within the 10-day response time required by regulation.

Time Period		Solano County Performance		State Performance	
10/01/06 – 12/31/06		98.3%		90.2%	
01/01/07 – 03/31/07		99.1%		90.9%	
<b>Strategy 5.a</b> Continue to collaborate closely with Human Resources to streamline the process for providing temporary staff to fill for absent staff and those on extended leave.			<b>Strategy Rationale</b> County procedures and other work force factors may hinder effective recruitment and retention of qualified staff, particularly individuals for limited term assignments. This strategy may require formal changes to hiring policies, e.g. to streamline the hiring of temporary staff.		
Milestone	<b>5a.1.</b> Work closely with Human Resources and department staff to make the hiring process go more quickly and smoothly <b>Update:</b> The hiring manager and the HR analyst have been working closely together to ensure that an interview date is established at the same time as the hiring list is certified; the candidate receives notification of certification along with date of interview, a newly established procedure that has significantly simplified and expedited the hiring process. CWS' hiring manager will continue to collaborate with HR to develop strategies for improving hiring practice and policy	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Deputy Director, Administrator and Managers
	<b>5.a.2.</b> Establish a policy of allowing the division to fill behind absent staff quickly and easily <b>Update:</b> A policy has not been established; however, CWS has developed a plan for filling behind time-limited vacancies that enabled two CWS staff to be hired quickly as acting, interim supervisors.		October 2006 Not Completed per projected timeframe. In progress.		Deputy Director, Administrator and Managers
	<b>5.a.3.</b> With Human Resources, develop a plan allowing the division to hire Extra Help staff quickly and easily when funding is available (as when the county received OIP grant funds) <b>Update:</b> 5.a.3 is requiring further consideration.		Ongoing Not Completed per projected timeframe. In progress.		Deputy Director, Administrator and Managers

	<p><b>5.a.4.</b> Centralize hiring process with one manager so as to streamline and coordinate interactions with Human Resources and Department Administration. <b>Update:</b> As of March of 2007, a Solano County manager was designated as CWS' Hiring Manager, which has appreciably increased collaboration/coordination with HR and the efficiency of the hiring process. To help streamline the process, this position has been authorized to send all hiring request directly to HR without requiring the Deputy Director's authorization.</p>		Completed and Ongoing		Hiring Manager
<p><b>Strategy 5.b</b> Improve timeliness and accuracy of data entry. Establish documentation standard that requires SWs to enter contacts within 10 calendar days.</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale</b> Since the relatively low performance in this measure is partially due to incomplete implementation of CWS/CMS, one key to improvement is timely and accurate data entry into the CWS/CMS.</p>			
Milestone	<p><b>5.b.1</b> Supervisors develop an individual work plan with each SW that will improve timely entry of data. <b>Update:</b> To date, progressive discipline, including individual work plans, is a strategy that is being used by supervisors in applicable CWS units to improve the timeliness and accuracy of data entry.</p>	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Supervisors
	<p><b>5.b.2</b> Require SWs to enter contact information within 10 calendar days. <b>Update:</b> Supervisors, in need, have been provided with a refresher training on the use of SafeMeasures as a program for monitoring data entry compliance. As new supervisors are hired, they are given individual instruction. All CWS Supervisors are now using SafeMeasures to monitor compliance reports, and they work closely with staff to ensure that all time sensitive data are entered within mandated timeframes. Supervisors are required to provide their respective managers with an explanation for any failure to enter documentation. Managers report to the Deputy Director. Protocol for entering contact information has been communicated to all staff, and social worker follow through is being evidenced by improved contact compliance reports.</p>		Ongoing		Supervisors

	<p><b>5.b.3</b> Use Safe Measures reporting mechanism to monitor and ensure that the 10-day contacts are made. <b>Update:</b> The QA/QI Program Specialist uses SafeMeasures and CWS/CMS to monitor and ensure compliance with Timely Social Worker Visits. As these proprietary data bases do not provide reports that enable confirmation of all categories of Social Worker contacts, e.g., consultation with collaterals, attorneys, and service providers etc., QA/QI must rely on input from supervisors. Most supervisors include CWS' 10-Day Contact rule as an objective in their staff's evaluations, and address contacts in supervision as well as in individual Performance Improvement Plans if a problem persists. In addition, albeit not yet implemented, the ER Manager is suggesting that the 10-day contact rule be added to the ER supervisors' checklist, which would enable routine compliance confirmation.</p>		Ongoing		QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors
<p><b>Strategy 5.c</b> Increase number of children seen within the appropriate timeframes.</p>		<p><b>Strategy Rationale</b> Although low performance in this area is partially due to data entry, there are also instances in which children have not been seen appropriately.</p>			
Milestone	<p><b>5.c.1</b> Continue recently established protocol requiring each social worker to report contact compliance to the supervisor, each supervisor to the manager, and each manager to the Deputy Director on a monthly basis. <b>Update:</b> This practice has been fully implemented throughout all CWS sections. Supervisors use SafeMeasures to monitor compliance, and they obtain monthly written contact reports from each social worker. Supervisors provide their respective managers with this report, and by the 10th of each month, managers submit a final report to the Deputy Director.</p>	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Social Workers, Supervisors, and Managers
	<p><b>5.c.2</b> Establish Performance Improvement Plan for social workers who fail to meet the goal. <b>Update:</b> When completing their monthly reports, social workers are required to provide explanations for any contacts they did not make. Identified patterns of noncompliance are initially addressed during supervision; however, if the problem persists, progressive discipline, including a PIP, is implemented in all applicable CWS units.</p>		Ongoing		Supervisors and Managers

	<p><b>5.c.3</b> Use Safe Measures reporting mechanism to monitor and ensure that the 10-day contacts are made. <b>Update:</b> The QA/QI Program Specialist uses SafeMeasures to monitor and ensure progress in area of Timely Social Worker Visits. Monthly reports are submitted to CWS' Deputy Director and to Program Administrator. SafeMeasures indicates a 6-month average of 94.6% for Solano County CWS Timely Social Worker Visits.</p>		Ongoing		QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors
<p><b>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fully implement SDM</li> <li>• Assigning one manager to focus on hiring staff to meet program goals</li> <li>• Newly hired Human Resources Director has a stated goal of reducing vacancies as a number one priority</li> <li>• Continue to encourage line staff, supervisors, and managers to utilize Safe Measures tool to improve compliance</li> <li>• Continue to work with Human Resources to hire Extra Help staff to fill behind staff on medical leave</li> </ul>					
<p><b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training to staff on SDM Policies and Procedures</li> <li>• Continue to enhance staff's awareness of the importance of SDM in achieving consistency and fairness</li> <li>• Ongoing training on the use of Safe Measures</li> </ul>					
<p><b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with law enforcement partners to ensure joint investigations are initiated within appropriate timeframe</li> </ul>					
<p><b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. N/A</b></p>					

**6.0: 2C Timely Social Worker Visits With Child:** This measure determines if social workers are seeing children on a monthly basis as required.

**Improvement Goal 6:** Increase the number of children who are visited by a Social Worker on a monthly basis.

Time Period		Solano County Performance	State Performance
2006	October	85.5%	91.4 %
	November	86.0%	91.8 %
	December	85.9%	92.2 %
2007	January	86.1%	92.6%
	February	87.0%	92.9%
	March	87.0%	93.3%

**Strategy 6.a**

Improve timeliness and accuracy of data entry.  
Establish documentation standard that requires SWs to enter contacts within 10 calendar days.

**Strategy Rationale**

Since the relatively low performance in this measure is partially due to incomplete implementation of CWS/CMS, one key to improvement is timely and accurate data entry into the CWS/CMS.

Milestone	<b>6.a.1</b> Supervisors will develop an individual work plan with each SW that will improve timely entry of data. <b>Update:</b> Identified patterns of noncompliance are initially dealt with during supervision; however, if the problem persists, a Performance Improvement Plan is developed. In addition, timely and accurate data entry is routinely addressed in employee evaluations.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Supervisors
	<b>6.a.2</b> Require SWs to enter contact information within 10 calendar days. <b>Update:</b> All CWS Supervisors are required to use proprietary data bases such as SafeMeasures and CWS/CMS, and some have developed idiosyncratic spreadsheets to monitor data entry compliance. Supervisors work closely with staff during individual supervision and when necessary, in unit meetings to ensure that all time sensitive data are entered within mandated timeframes. Identified patterns of noncompliance are initially addressed during individual supervision; however, if the problem persists, a Performance Improvement Plan is developed. Protocol for entering contact information has been communicated to all staff, and social worker follow through is being evidenced by improved contact compliance reports.		Ongoing		Supervisors



	<p><b>6.a.3</b> Train all SWs to enter secondary assignment for courtesy supervision cases so other SWs are able to enter contacts <b>Update:</b> 6.a.3 has not been accomplished. Supervisors generally make secondary assignments; however, the recent addition of a CWS/CMS trainer will enables social workers to be trained to enter secondary assignments.</p>		Ongoing Not completed per projected timeframe In progress		Supervisors
	<p><b>6.a.4</b> Supervisors monitor use of case plans in system so that data will accurately reflect when exemptions are in place. <b>Update:</b> Previous supervisors had begun this practice, but a 50% turnover in FM/FR now requires staff to be reoriented on the SafeMeasures tool that monitors compliance in this area.</p> <p>The QA/QI Program Specialist and the CWS/CMS trainer have made appointments for training newly hired and interim supervisors in the use of the SafeMeasures and CWS/CMS tools that will enable them to monitor case plans so that data will accurately reflect when exemptions are in place.</p>		Ongoing		Staff Development Supervisor with monitoring by other supervisors
	<p><b>6.a.5</b> Use Safe Measures reporting mechanism to monitor and ensure that the 10-day contacts are made. <b>Update:</b> The QA/QI Program Specialist uses SafeMeasures and CWS/CMS to monitor and ensure compliance with Timely Social Worker Visits. As these proprietary data bases do not provide reports that enable confirmation of all categories of Social Worker contacts, e.g., consultation with collaterals, attorneys, and service providers etc., QA/QI must rely on input from supervisors. Most supervisors include the 10-day contact rule as an objective in their staff's evaluations, and address contacts in supervision as well as in individual Performance Improvement Plans if a problem persists. In addition, albeit not yet implemented, the ER Manager is suggesting that the 10-day contact rule be added to the ER supervisors' checklist, which would enable routine compliance confirmation.</p>		Ongoing		QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors

Strategy 6.b		Strategy Rationale			
Increase number of children seen within the appropriate timeframes.		Although low performance in this area is partially due to data entry, there are also instances in which children have not been seen appropriately.			
Milestone	<b>6.b.1</b> Continue recently established protocol requiring each social worker to report contact compliance to the supervisor, each supervisor to the manager, and each manager to the Deputy Director on a monthly basis. <b>Update:</b> On a monthly basis, each social worker provides a monthly contact compliance report to supervisors, supervisors to manages, and by the 10 <sup>th</sup> of each month, Section Managers prepare a final report for CWS Deputy Director.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Social Workers, Supervisors, and Managers
	<b>6.b.2</b> Establish Performance Improvement Plan for social workers who fail to meet the goal. <b>Update:</b> When completing their monthly reports, social workers are required to provide explanations for any contacts they did not make. Identified patterns of noncompliance are initially addressed during supervision; however, if the problem persists, a Performance Improvement Plan is developed.		Ongoing		Supervisors and Managers
	<b>6.b.3</b> Use Safe Measures reporting mechanism to monitor and ensure that the 10-day contacts are made. <b>Update:</b> The QA/QI Program Specialist uses SafeMeasures and CWS/CMS to monitor Timely Social Worker Visits. Monthly reports are submitted to CWS' Deputy Director and to Program Administrator.		Ongoing		QA/QI Program Specialist with input from Supervisors

<b>Strategy 6.c</b> Minimize travel time for visits with children and families.		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> Travel time is time unavailable for either work with child and family or data entry.			
Milestone	<b>6.c.1</b> Establish visitation center on site which will allow SWs to sometimes see children on site without traveling <b>Update:</b> Circumstances beyond the control of CWS administration necessitated a delay in the development of the Visitation Center	Timeframe	November 2006 In Progress	Assigned to	Deputy Director and Administrator
	Identify a supervisor whose responsibility is to work with administrators to develop the visitation center as well as to work with the Program Specialist to revise policy and procedure for a visitation program that will include best practice strategies. The facility request has been submitted and approved.		Beginning November 2007 and Continuing		
	<b>6.c.2</b> Assign FM/FR cases on a geographic basis thus minimizing travel time as well as allowing SWs to establish closer connections to community resources <b>Update:</b> This milestone is still in progress. The FM/FR manager and supervisors have been meeting recently to develop strategies for implementing this change.		October 2006 In Progress		FM/FR Supervisors
<b>Strategy 6.d</b> Fully implement SDM		<b>Strategy Rationale</b> SDM requires additional visits for high-risk families, thus ensuring monthly contact occurs.			
Milestone	<b>6.d.1.</b> Fill recently authorized position for an additional SWII to complete additional visits associated with SDM. <b>Update:</b> The SW II began working in this position on October 30, 2006 and was assigned to ER to assist with extra tasks associated with SDM.	Timeframe	October 2006 Completed	Assigned to	Hiring Manager
<b>Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continue to encourage line staff, supervisors, and managers to utilize Safe Measures tool to improve compliance</li><li>Establish onsite visitation center</li><li>Fill recently established position for SW to complete additional visits associated with SDM</li><li>Continue to work with Human Resources to hire Extra Help staff to fill behind staff on medical leave</li></ul>					
<b>Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide training to staff on SDM Policies and Procedures</li><li>Continue to enhance staff's awareness of the importance of SDM in achieving consistency and fairness</li><li>Ongoing training on the use of Safe Measures</li></ul>					
<b>Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.</b> N/A					
<b>Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.</b> N/A					

**Solano County Child Welfare Service  
System Improvement Plan  
Glossary of Terms**

**ERI:** Emergency Response/ Intake: ER services consist of a response system providing in-person response, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a child. ER workers determine the necessity for providing initial intake services and crisis intervention to maintain the child safely in his or her own home or to protect the safety of the child.

**FM/FR:** Family Maintenance/Family Reunification: FM services are activities designed to provide in-home protective services to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse or exploitation, for the purposes of preventing separation of children from their families. FR services are activities designed to provide time-limited foster care services to prevent or remedy neglect, abuse, or exploitation when the child cannot safely remain at home, and needs temporary foster care, while services are provided to reunite the family.

**FRCs:** Family Resource Centers Family Resource Centers: FRCs are neighborhood-based agencies that provide services to support families and strengthen communities. FRCs view families as important advocates for children and local communities and work with families in a spirit of mutual respect. Solano's FRCs provide a local space for families to get information, learn about available services, meet other families and get involved in community activities. Solano's FRCs are open to all families, regardless of income.

**LSU:** Legal Services Unit: The mission of the Legal Services Unit is to provide quality support services to ensure that legal documents are processed in accordance with mandates and established policies. We also want to uphold the highest level of social work professionalism when interacting with the child welfare legal system and when resolving court related issues

**OCAP:** Office of Child Abuse Prevention

**PP:** Permanency Planning: PP services are activities designed to provide an alternate permanent family structure for children who because of abuse, neglect, or exploitation cannot safely remain at home and who are unlikely to ever return home. These services shall be provided on behalf of children for whom there has been a judicial determination of a permanent plan for adoption, legal guardianship, or long-term care.

**P.I.E.** The Parent Information Exchange Meetings is a new tool being introduced into practice at Solano County Health & Social Services, Child Welfare as well as several other counties throughout the State. The purpose is to facilitate face-to-face contact and discussion between a birth and foster parent to ensure that while a foster child is in out-of-home care, they are as comfortable as possible. The foster parent, birth parent and agency staff person will attend. Children can also attend, depending on their age and maturity. Foster parents, foster children, and birth parents will benefit when there is contact/communication between birth and foster parents. Foster parents benefit since they are able to get specific information from the parent, which will allow them to better understand the needs of the child. Studies show children will do better in their placement, have better emotional development, do better in school, and are more likely to successfully return home. Birth parents are able to feel more at ease about their child's safety, well-being and placement.

**QA/QI:** Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Program Specialist

**SDM:** Structured Decision Making: Structured decision-making is an approach to child protective services that uses clearly defined and consistently applied decision-making criteria for screening for investigation, determining response priority, identifying immediate threatened harm, and estimating the risk of future abuse and neglect. Child and family needs and strengths are identified and considered in developing and monitoring progress toward a case plan.

**Strategies:** Strategies is funded by the State of California, Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention and the S.H. Cowell Foundation to provide comprehensive training and technical

assistance to Family Resource Centers (FRCs). For the purpose of having been cited in Solano County's SIP, Strategies was the lead agency for the Solano County FRCs' redesign of the Family Development Matrix, a strength-based assessment tool that provides FRCs with reliable information to track family outcomes over time in a way that allows for an understanding of the complex challenges and needs of each families and thus for provision of resources where they are the most efficient and effective.

**TDMs:** Team Decision Making: TDMs (meetings) are one component of the Family to Family Initiative that are designed to ensure a network of support for a child and the adults who care for them. The goal of TDMs is to include birth families, community members, along with resource families, service providers and agency staff in all decisions involving child removal, change of placement, and reunification or other permanency plans. The TDM meeting is held prior to the child's removal, or in cases of imminent risk, by the next working day, and always before the initial court hearing in cases of removal. . The meeting is led by a skilled, immediately accessible, internal facilitator, who is not a case-carrying social worker or line supervisor. Information about each meeting, including participants, location, and recommendations, is collected and ultimately linked to data on child and family outcomes, in order to ensure continuing self evaluation of the TDM process and its effectiveness.

**VFM:** Volunteer Family Maintenance (Unit): VFM is the provision of non-court time limited protective services to families who children are in potential danger of abuse, neglect or exploitation when the child can safely remain in the home and the family is willing to accept services and engage in corrective action. The agreement for voluntary services may be initiated by the Child Welfare Social Worker or by the court, following the dismissal of a petition.